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LETTER DATED 16 SEPTEMBER 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached letter dated 15 September 1997 which I have received from the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee established pursuant to the mandate of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB).

Attached to the letter is the third periodic report of the Member States participating in MISAB, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1125 (1997) of 6 August 1997. I should be grateful if you would bring the letter and its enclosure to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

[Original: French]

Letter dated 15 September 1997 from the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the third report, covering the period from 3 to 17 September 1997, requested by the Security Council in paragraph 6 of resolution 1125 (1997) concerning the situation in the Central African Republic.

(Signed) General Amadou Toumani TOURÉ
Chairman of the International
Monitoring Committee

Enclosure

Third report to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1125 (1997) concerning the situation in the Central African Republic

(15 September 1997)

INTRODUCTION

1. On 6 August 1997, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1125 (1997), in which it approved the continued conduct by Member States participating in the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) of the operation to achieve its objective to facilitate the return to peace and security by monitoring the implementation of the Bangui Agreements. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council authorized the Member States participating in MISAB and those States providing logistical support to ensure the security and freedom of movement of their personnel. It decided that that authorization would be limited to an initial period of three months, after which the Council would assess the situation on the basis of the reports submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations at least every two weeks by the Member States participating in MISAB.

2. This is the third report which the Security Council requested the Member States participating in MISAB to provide pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1125 (1997). It was prepared by the International Monitoring Committee to supervise the implementation of the Bangui Agreements, which includes the representatives of the States members of the International Mediation Committee (Gabon, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali) and a consultant from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the MISAB Command, which consists of high-ranking officers representing all of the Member States participating in MISAB, including Senegal and Togo.

3. This report describes developments in the situation in the Central African Republic from 3 to 17 September 1997.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

4. Both the International Monitoring Committee to supervise the implementation of the Bangui Agreements and the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements are under the political authority of General Amadou Toumani Touré, former President of the Republic of Mali, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee and personal representative of the heads of State concerned.

5. The International Monitoring Committee to supervise the implementation of the Bangui Agreements, chaired by General Touré, includes one representative of each of the four heads of State of the members of the International Mediation

Committee, as well as a consultant from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), who acts as a diplomatic adviser to the Committee.

6. Thus, the International Monitoring Committee is the body which directs the actions of MISAB, since it receives the necessary political guidance directly from the heads of State concerned, and especially from the President of the Gabonese Republic, who is Chairman of the International Mediation Committee. As such, it is the negotiating body among the various parties to the Central African crisis (President of the Republic, Government, presidential majority, Group of 11 opposition political parties, moderate opposition parties or CODEPO, centrists, former rebels, loyalist members of the armed forces, trade unions, civil society). As its name indicates, the International Monitoring Committee is primarily responsible for the political monitoring of the Bangui Agreements.

7. The International Monitoring Committee has adopted a plan of action which reflects the gist of the main provisions of the Bangui Agreements in the form of a timetable, which can be outlined as follows:

- Formation of a government of national union;

- Adoption of an amnesty law covering those who committed offences in the context of the third rebellion;

- Disarmament (surrender of weapons by the former rebels in honour and dignity, and recovery of weapons by MISAB from militias and civilian populations);

- Implementation of the recommendations of the General Meeting on National Defence;

- Situation of former heads of State;

- Suspension of the parliamentary audit;

- Final phase of national reconciliation through a number of actions aimed at consolidating peace and security (organization of regional and sectoral awareness-raising seminars, organization of a National Reconciliation Conference, elaboration of an electoral code, access by political parties to the State media and other measures).

8. MISAB is under the patronage of President El Hadj Omar Bongo of Gabon, senior head of State of the International Mediation Committee. It is under the political authority of General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee. While it was initially under the command of Brigadier General Edjo Edouard Nkili of Gabon, since 2 August 1997 it has been headed by General Augustin Mombo Moukagni of Gabon, assisted by a Chief of Staff (Colonel Talla Niang of Senegal), a Legal Counsel (Colonel Sizing Walla of Togo) and the heads of each of the six contingents.

9. From 3 to 17 September 1997 the International Monitoring Committee took various steps to secure progress in relation to each of the elements in its

timetable which had been implemented only in part or not at all and which reflect the various political arrangements.

Government of national union

10. It should be recalled that on 1 September 1997 the Government of Action in Defence of Democracy was re-established in its original form, as constituted prior to 6 May 1997, following four months of crisis. Thus the Government of Action in Defence of Democracy in its entirety resumed its normal activities on 2 September with a meeting of the Council of Ministers presided over by the President of the Republic and Head of State.

Implementation of the amnesty act covering offences relating to the third rebellion and the misappropriation of public funds under investigation

11. This act, which was promulgated on 15 March 1997, is currently being implemented with a great deal of pragmatism and understanding. It is not being implemented blindly as regards the sanctions to be taken against citizens who may be illegally in possession of weapons following the 15-day deadline established by the law. The Head of State and the relevant political authorities have thus far shown a sense of responsibility and level-headedness and have taken into account the exceptional political situation in which this law should be applied in all its aspects.

12. This pragmatism has enabled the International Monitoring Committee to negotiate with the former rebels and to persuade them to hand over their weapons with honour and dignity. It is in that same context that Lieutenant-Colonel Konzzale, Minister to the Office of the Minister for Territorial Administration, who is responsible for public security and disarmament, has, as head of a technical commission consisting of, inter alia, 10 resource persons (deputies, area heads, former rebels) paid by UNDP, with the participation of the International Monitoring Committee and MISAB, been conducting an awareness-raising and weapons recovery campaign among the civilian population since 12 August 1997.

Disarmament

13. This is, without a doubt, the most delicate phase of the national reconciliation process. Two major phases are envisaged which will make it possible to carry out this operation effectively:

(a) The awareness-raising and voluntary participation phase;

(b) The investigation, intervention and implementation-of-the-law phase.

14. The voluntary participation phase is the preliminary period which will end on 30 September 1997 as stipulated in the ministerial order of 5 September 1997. Its purpose is to raise the awareness of the Central African people by a campaign conducted on the radio, television and in the written press and also by putting up banners and posters bearing slogans supporting peace, national unity, national reconciliation and disarmament on the main roads of Bangui. Any patriotic citizens who turned in their weapons of their own accord would be

rewarded for doing so, in order to encourage all the other ones to return any weapons they might have in their possession. It should be pointed out here that this is in no way a weapons buy-back operation.

15. After recovery of the weapons of the former rebels, the second phase of disarmament will involve collecting weapons from civilians, militias and illegal holders of weapons. For this purpose the International Monitoring Committee, in agreement with the Government of the Central African Republic, has recruited 10 resource staff (deputies, neighbourhood leaders, former rebels, opinion leaders) as chairmen of local disarmament committees in their respective zones. This staff, following deployment to districts, established disarmament committees in each neighbourhood. Their role is to inform the local population through neighbourhood meetings, rallies, talks, discussions and small gatherings and neighbourhood visits, so as to convince the population of the need to turn in illegally held weapons.

16. UNDP has established funding in the amount of $40,000 for the 10 resource staff, dignitaries, neighbourhood leaders and opinion leaders. People voluntarily turning in weapons or helping in their collection will receive a token reward. The reward, in the amount of 2,500 to 5,000 CFA francs ($5-10) according to the type of weapon, is intended primarily to exonerate civilians turning in weapons. With effect from 1 October 1997, anyone with weapons in their possession will be the target of legal action and the authorities will make use of the police and constabulary as needed.

17. The investigations, intervention and implementation-of-the-law phase will begin immediately following the first one. It will involve collaborating with informers compensated according to the quality of their information. That will make it possible to locate any weapons caches. During this second period anyone found to be illegally in possession of a weapon will be handed over to the authorities. In addition, MISAB will conduct searches, together with the national defence and security forces other than the presidential security force.

18. The awareness-raising campaign of the Technical Commission on Disarmament, presided over by Lieutenant-Colonel Konzzale, was started on 12 August 1997 and is continuing in the various areas of the city of Bangui and at the level of the various religious groups, as well as on radio and television.

19. Like the meetings with Protestant leaders on 18 August 1997 and Muslim delegates on 23 August 1997, Minister Konzzale, accompanied by Ambassador Mongbé and Captain Saulet, chaired an important awareness-raising meeting with Catholic community leaders.

20. On Saturday, 6 September, a special awareness-raising campaign was conducted in the Pétévo neighbourhood, previously under the control of the former rebels, to demonstrate to the population how to turn in weapons and munitions. The meeting, presided over by Ambassador Mongbé, included enactments and songs which showed the dangers of holding military weapons and which celebrated peace.

21. On Wednesday, 10 September, imams in the city of Bangui received at the Central Mosque a delegation from the Disarmament Technical Committee, headed by

Minister Konzzale, to hear more detailed explanations regarding the procedures for turning in weapons on peaceful terms.

22. To date the results obtained in the area of disarmament are as follows: since the signing of the Truce Agreement of 28 June 1997 and of the Ceasefire Agreement of 2 July 1997, the following weapons have been handed over to MISAB:

Heavy weapons

Designation	Quantity	Increase (1-15 September 1997)
120 mm mortars	surrendered: 2 out of a total of 4	
81 mm mortars	surrendered: 7 out of a total of 15	
60 mm mortars	surrendered: 9 out of a total of 19	
14.5 mm machine-guns	surrendered: 6 out of a total of 6	
12.7 mm machine-guns	surrendered: 1 out of a total of 3	
75 mm recoilless guns	surrendered: 2 out of a total of 2	
73 mm anti-tank rocket launchers	surrendered: 64 out of a total of 67	1
Rocket-propelled grenades	surrendered: 6 out of a total of 11	1
Total	surrendered: 97 out of a total of 127	3
	(weapons recovered: 76.37 per cent)	2.36 per cent

Light weapons

Designation		Quantity	Increase (1-15 September 1997)
Hand-guns (misc)	surrendered:	7 out of a total of 111	
Submachine-guns	surrendered:	221 out of a total of 459	12
Assault rifles	surrendered:	198 out of a total of 541	22
MAS 36-49/56-M14 rifles + muskets	surrendered:	489 out of a total of 1,181	69
Light machine-guns	surrendered:	47 out of a total of 80	2
.30-calibre machine-guns	surrendered:	13 out of a total of 17	
Total	surrendered:	987 out of a total of 2,389	115
	(weapons recovered:	41.31 per cent)	4.81 per cent

An appreciable quantity of explosives of various kinds has recently been recovered and will shortly be carefully sorted.

23. A quantity of munitions of various types was recovered and packaged. The status of these munitions as at 15 September 1997 is set out below:

Designation	Quantity	Remarks
5.56 mm rounds	68 150	
7.5 mm SLC rounds	14 000	
7.5 mm S/B rounds	87 250	+ 20 = 87 270
7.5 mm X rounds	34 000	
7.5 mm X S/B rounds	135	
7.62 mm rounds, NATO	4 700	
7.62 mm SB rounds, NATO	11 262	
7.62 mm Kalashnikov rounds		+ 242
7.62 mm long rounds	119 640	+ 01 = 119 641
7.62 mm Tokarev rounds	900	

Designation	Quantity	Remarks
.30-calibre S/B rounds, US		
9 mm Para rounds		
9 mm Walter rounds	1 350	
.12-calibre riot control rounds	711	
12.7 mm rounds		
14.5 mm rounds	13 900	
37 fragmentation hand grenades	1 613	Fuse assembly unserviceable
Fragmentation hand grenades, China	2 020	+ 4
RPG 7 rockets	354	
37 stun hand grenades	979	Fuse assembly unserviceable
FL LAC F4 hand grenades	1 225	
F4 hand grenades	316	
60 mm mortars	1 663	+ 12
81 mm mortars	633	
120 mm mortars	50	+ 2 = 52
75 mm recoilless rifle rounds, US	166	
75 mm recoilless rifle rounds, China	223	No weapons in inventory
M79 40 mm rounds, US	6 060	No weapons in inventory
Time fuses (inactive)	23 252 325	
7.5 mm grenade cartridges	755	No rifle grenades

GR FLG AP34 + 03

DFRUSS + 01

A significant quantity of miscellaneous munitions, handed over loose, not suitable for firing, will be destroyed by the competent weapons and munitions units. An analysis will be made available in due course.

Recommendations from the General Meeting on National Defence

24. It appears that quite a few of the claims made by the former rebels could be answered by responsible implementation of the 282 recommendations made at the General Meeting on National Defence which was held in August 1996 at Bangui. That is why the International Monitoring Committee, true to the spirit of the Bangui Agreements, proceeded, in April 1997, to set up an ad hoc committee to examine the said recommendations carefully and to set up a schedule for their implementation, breaking them down into categories according to what could be applicable in the short-, medium- and long-term based on the sensitivity of the areas to which the recommendations relate and, above all, the financial resources that would have to be mobilized. The results of the work of the ad hoc committee, which was presided over by a leader of the opposition, General Timothée Malendoma, a former prime minister, have already been

transmitted by the International Monitoring Committee to the Ministry of Defence for implementation at the various relevant levels. Since the International Monitoring Committee is merely a mediating body, it must leave the decisions on these matters to the relevant Central African authorities, while remaining ready to serve as arbitrator should the need arise.

Situation of former heads of State

25. A revised bill has just been prepared by the Government for presentation to the National Assembly at its next session, which will be held in October. Assurances in this regard were provided to the International Monitoring Committee by the expanded bureau of the National Assembly at the meeting on 4 September 1997.

Suspension of the parliamentary audit

26. The Bangui Agreements call for the suspension, then the abandonment "of the judicial enforcement of the parliamentary audit" opened in respect of persons presumed to have misappropriated public funds under the previous regime, for it was understood that the audit had been conducted in a very selective manner and was creating more problems than it was resolving. The International Monitoring Committee, respecting the spirit of the Bangui Agreements, proposed that the Central African Republic should, by a legislative act, formally renounce proceedings against authors of offences identified by the parliamentary audit. It was generally agreed that such an act would undoubtedly be taken in the context of the next session of the National Assembly.

National reconciliation

27. Each of the points mentioned above constitutes as many phases on the road leading towards national reconciliation. The present section therefore concerns the final phase of this exciting process.

28. The International Monitoring Committee, supported by UNDP, is already engaged in making preparations for awareness-raising seminars, symposia and meetings; the first phase will take place at the provincial level and be targeted at specific groups (such as trade unions, women's organizations and youth movements), and the second phase will take place nationally, in the form of a national reconciliation conference, as recommended by the Bangui Agreements. For this purpose, the Committee is working in close cooperation with the Minister for Human Rights, National Reconciliation and Promotion of a Democratic Culture, who chairs the technical commission on awareness-raising under the patronage of the Prime Minister. At the most recent weekly meeting, held on 27 August 1997, the participants appraised the cost of each of the activities in question and targeted potential sources of funding. Starting on 20 September 1997, missions to identify potential participants in the regional preparatory seminars for the national reconciliation conference will be sent to the five selected areas.

29. In the context of the restructuring of the Central African Armed Forces, the International Monitoring Committee had requested UNDP to set up a fund to assist military personnel wishing to leave active service in returning to

civilian life, and UNDP had agreed to do so. UNDP launched a project on demobilization, retraining and reintegration for the Central African Armed Forces, which would make it possible to reduce the cost of operating the armed forces and facilitate their restructuring. All Member States and international organizations may make contributions to the fund in question, which will initially be for an amount of approximately $2 million. A first estimate indicates that 1,000 or more soldiers will be involved in this project. The UNDP Resident Representative in Bangui is awaiting the arrival of the project head to launch the operational phase.

COOPERATION WITH THE CENTRAL AFRICAN AUTHORITIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

30. Pursuant to its mandate, the International Monitoring Committee maintains constant contact with the various Central African authorities to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Bangui Agreements. In this connection, it is regularly consulted both by the President of the Republic and head of State and by the Prime Minister and head of Government, as well as by the National Assembly, on a considerable number of issues concerning the life of the Central African nation.

31. Thus, an International Monitoring Committee delegation, composed of Lieutenant Colonel Mahamat Achakir, Coordinator a.i., Ambassador René-Valéry Mongbé, Diplomatic Counsellor, Mr. Oumar-Aba Traoré, Permanent Secretary, and Mr. Abel Balenguele and Ms. Fernande Françoise Sackannot, national consultants, met on 4 September 1997 with the officers of the National Assembly, expanded to include the heads of the various permanent committees and parliamentary groups, to participate in a working meeting. This meeting allowed the international Monitoring Committee delegation to report on the status of the implementation of the Bangui Agreements and to stress the need for all parties concerned to continue to show their good will in solving unsettled problems.

32. The officers of the National Assembly were very much encouraged by the results of this meeting, but they also expressed their concern about the problem of unpaid back wages, which remains a constant source of social upheaval. Accordingly, they requested the International Monitoring Committee to continue to provide its support to the competent Central African authorities in their efforts during the resumed negotiations with the Bretton Woods institutions.

33. The International Monitoring Committee, acting on behalf of MISAB and/or on its own behalf, maintains regular contacts with international organizations, including UNDP and foreign diplomatic missions based in Bangui, with a view to requesting their diplomatic, financial and material support for mediation initiatives in the Central African Republic.

34. In the period covered by this report, the International Monitoring Committee was received by the President of the Republic and by the Prime Minister to discuss, among other things, issues relating to the recovery of weapons in circulation among the civilian population and various measures relating to economic recovery and the difficult social situation stemming from the six-months' accumulation of back wages. On the morning of

11 September 1997, dozens of Bangui University students tried to raise barricades on the Avenue des Martyrs, the main thoroughfare in Bangui, to protest against the six-months' backlog in the disbursal of university scholarships. Law enforcement officials broke up the demonstration without difficulty. No injuries were reported, and MISAB did not have to intervene.

35. On Friday, 12 September 1997, the International Monitoring Committee met successively with the following groups: a delegation of the parties of the presidential majority and the leaders of the Group of 11 Opposition Parties, the Coalition of Opposition Parties and the Group of Centrists. The purpose of these meetings was to prepare for the implementation of the remaining stages of the timetable, in particular regarding the situation of former Presidents and the suspension of the parliamentary audit. The Committee took advantage of these meetings to request the various groups of political parties to become involved in the awareness-raising campaign with a view towards disarmament. All the groups committed themselves to participate.

36. Project CAF/97/001, through which UNDP contributes its logistical and technical support, will probably be terminated at the end of September 1997 for lack of funds. In a letter dated 4 September 1997 addressed to the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee, the Resident Representative of UNDP in Bangui drew attention to this situation, but noted that Ambassador Mongbé and the consultant Abel Balenguele, whose contracts expire on 31 October, could continue their mission until that date.

37. It is clear that the continuation of the Committee's activities as a mediating body will depend either on the willingness of UNDP officials to prolong the project or on finding another source of funding. In any case, it is difficult to see how the mediation effort, and thus the rest of the process, can continue without a mediator.

DEPLOYMENT OF THE FORCE

38. It should be recalled that, at the request of the mediator, General Amadou Toumani Touré, and with the agreement of the Conference on Consensus-Building and Dialogue, held in Bangui from 11 to 16 January 1997, the heads of State of Gabon, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad decided to send an inter-African force with logistical support from France. This force, known as the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB), includes, in addition to troops from Gabon, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad (the countries members of the International Mediation Committee), troops from Senegal and Togo, as a result of the decision of President Abdou Diouf and President Gnassingbé Eyadema to contribute to this gesture of African solidarity.

39. The activities of MISAB are governed by the mandate assigned to it by the heads of State concerned (see S/1997/561). These daily activities are many and complex, and can be summed up as actions aimed at preventing confrontation between the two main forces in question, the loyalists of the Central African Armed Forces and the former rebels.

40. MISAB, which is deployed throughout the city of Bangui, is ensuring security in all neighbourhoods of the Central African capital by occupying 20 surveillance posts, and is carrying out patrols nightly in each of the city's eight districts.

41. The MISAB force currently consists of six contingents with a strength of 796 soldiers (officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks), distributed as follows:

Burkina Faso	114
Chad	147
Gabon	149
Mali	113
Senegal	153
Togo	120

The force is provided with a French logistical support command unit, with 88 men. A French liaison and assistance detachment, with 39 men, has been made available to MISAB.

42. Owing to the development of organized crime, with the passive or active complicity of the former rebels, the activities of MISAB have been extended, with the agreement of the parties concerned, to operations to maintain security in the various neighbourhoods. Since the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement on 2 July 1997, MISAB has participated, on the basis of a consensus, in joint security patrols with approximately 120 men, consisting of MISAB personnel, loyalists and rebels in all districts of Bangui.

43. A major coordination meeting was held on Tuesday, 9 September 1997, attended by the heads of all defence and security services in the country, members of the International Monitoring Committee and a delegation from the MISAB Command. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the activities of the joint (MISAB/Central African Armed Forces/Gendarmerie Nationale/Central African Police) security patrols which have been operating since June and the efforts to recover weapons. The meeting was followed by an announcement that, in keeping with the ministerial order that had been issued, the awareness-raising and voluntary-participation phase would end on 30 September 1997, while the second phase, during which the legislation in force with regard to the illegal possession of weapons would be enforced to the fullest extent, would begin on 1 October.

44. Apart from the security patrols which have brought peace and quiet to Bangui, MISAB is the only force to receive requests for assistance from all neighbourhoods in the city. During the period from 3 to 15 September 1997 these included:

Humanitarian assistance

- 6 medical evacuations during the night for various injuries;

- 7 medical evacuations during the night for childbirth;

- 3 medical evacuations for various illnesses.

Responses to night-time calls relating to assaults

- 15 responses involving cases where persons were threatened, assaulted or robbed.

These requests make it abundantly clear that MISAB has been fully integrated in the social fabric and has won the confidence of all segments of the population of Bangui.

45. In the daytime, it is also MISAB that provides security and escorts for convoys to supply fuel, a strategic product to be delivered to all the stations of PETROCA, the national petroleum products distribution company, from the Kolongo fuel depot, which is located in an area previously controlled by the former rebels. MISAB was deployed to complement the actions of the various security services, which had been weakened by the rebellion.

46. During the fortnight from 3 to 15 September 1997, MISAB security activities resulted in the following:

Reports

- 5 muggings;

- criminal activity by a 9-member gang;

- 3 burglaries;

- 4 robberies (cash, various articles and items of equipment);

- 3 car hold-ups.

The perpetrators of these offences were apprehended and turned over to the Gendarmerie Nationale Centrafricaine, which conducted investigations and filed reports. It should be noted that the crime rate in Bangui and the surrounding area has fallen significantly since the previous report. There has been a distinct improvement in the security situation.

47. The Central African police force have resumed their operations in the main streets of Bangui, freeing the Presidential Guard to focus on the strategic points which fall under their control by law. This points to a considerable relaxation of tension among the entire population of Bangui, which now feels that the state of emergency is over. Economic and cultural life and organized sports are resuming, as are international contacts. Bangui appears to be rising from the ashes reborn.

48. MISAB receives logistical support from the following sources:

(a) Each of the participating States with troops in Bangui provides its personnel (officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks) with their regular pay and supplies them with weapons;

(b) France, which was an observer of the Bangui Agreements, has agreed to provide logistical support to the various contingents as follows:

- Payment of the soldiers' total food allowance and daily subsistence allowance at the rates currently applicable to Central African military personnel;

- Payment of rents for the buildings used by military personnel and the MISAB Command;

- Provision of tactical and support vehicles for the force;

- Supply of fuel and vehicle maintenance;

- Supply of office equipment.

An overall evaluation of the cost of deploying MISAB in Bangui cannot be conducted until the end of the mission. However, taking all expenses into account, the cost of the logistical support provided to MISAB by France amounts to some 350 million CFA francs a month, or approximately $600,000;

(c) The Government of the Central African Republic is supplying vehicles for use by command personnel;

(d) The Organization of African Unity (OAU) made a special grant in the amount of $40,000 in March 1997 to assist the various contingents. A second special grant of $60,000 has been made jointly to the International Monitoring Committee and MISAB.

49. In the course of the various operations conducted by MISAB, and particularly during the confrontations of 22 and 23 March and 20 to 26 June, the force suffered the following losses: 6 dead (3 Chadian soldiers, 2 Gabonese soldiers and 1 Senegalese soldier) and 20 wounded (13 Chadian soldiers, 5 Senegalese soldiers, 1 Malian soldier and 1 Gabonese soldier).

Conclusions

50. The current experience with the Central African crisis is unique and is all the more stimulating in that it is unlike any previous experience. However, there is a risk that this progress may be jeopardized in view of the social problems associated with the payment of outstanding back wages, pensions and scholarships. It may also be cut short if:

(a) UNDP does not continue to provide logistical and technical support in one form or another to the International Monitoring Committee, a mediation authority whose presence in the capital would seem to be necessary for some time

to come. It is generally hoped in Bangui that the Committee will continue to provide political guidance to MISAB and act as a mediator between those in power and the opposition;

(b) The mandate of MISAB is not extended (even if it has to be changed in the long term) so that security and peace-building can be ensured until the next round of elections, scheduled for 1998.

51. It must be pointed out that, owing to the insufficiency of the African countries' own resources, logistical support from the international community, along the lines of the support which France has provided to MISAB and which remains open to contributions from all other States, is still needed.

52. The International Monitoring Committee and MISAB welcome the understanding of this issue expressed by the Security Council after its consideration of the first two reports. They hope that the appeal made to the international community by the President of the Council will be met with action.

53. It is fitting to mention here the ways in which life in Bangui and the rest of the country has returned to normal (or nearly so):

- Virtually all government offices have resumed operations as a result of the newly restored peace and the recent efforts by the Government to pay monthly salaries on time, even though it is still unable to solve the sensitive issue of back pay;

- Schools and universities ended the academic year under satisfactory circumstances: even examinations went forward as usual;

- Markets have resumed their normal operations;

- Public transport is working and traffic is once again heavy in commercial areas and the surrounding neighbourhoods;

- Airlines (Air Afrique, Air France and Air Gabon in particular) have resumed regular service to Bangui;

- Lastly, the free movement of persons and goods from place to place within the capital, which had been a divided city since the third rebellion, has become a reality.

54. Bangui has entered a new era with determination, an era marked by a gradual rebuilding of confidence and the resumption of activities in numerous spheres, which is a sign that peace has been restored. That peace must now be consolidated.